

Message Text

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11

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-10 ISO-00 DHA-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07

NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 EUR-12 SCCT-01

/053 W

----- 118731

R 292122Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4172

INFO AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 5256

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: CI, PINT, SHUM

SUBJECT: CHURCH, CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS, AND DEAD/DISAPPEARED
CHILEAN EXTREMISTS

REFS: A) SANTIAGO 5185 (NOTAL) B) SANTIAGO 590 (NOTAL)

C) SANTIAGO 5225 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: STORY OF 119 MEMBERS OF CHILEAN MOVEMENT OF
REVOLUTIONARY LEFT (MIR) REPORTEDLY KILLED, WOUNDED OR
DISAPPEARED ABROAD CONTINUES TO ATTRACT ATTENTION. CATHOLIC
CHURCH LEADERS MAY MAKE PUBLIC REQUEST FOR INVESTIGATION
IF GOVERNMENT DOES NOT MOVE QUICKLY, AND CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC
(PDC) RADIO STATION MAY BE RUNNING RISK BY ITS EXTENSIVE
REPORTING. END SUMMARY.

2. PRIEST CLOSE TO CARDINAL SILVA TOLD ADCM THAT AT JULY
24 MEETING BETWEEN CARDINAL AND PRESIDENT PINOCHET (REF A),
FORMER ASKED FOR AND LATTER PROMISED THAT GOC WOULD INVESTIGATE
CASES OF MISSING 119 ALLEGED MIRISTAS. PRIEST SAID THAT
BISHOPS WHO DISCUSSED MATTER FEEL VERY STRONGLY; IF BY END
OF WEEK GOC HAS NOT ANNOUNCED THOROUGH INVESTIGATION,
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BISHOPS ARE EXPECTED TO CALL FOR IT PUBLICLY. (COMMENT:

COMMITTEE FOR PEACE'S PUBLIC REQUEST FOR INVESTIGATION--
REF C--THEREFORE FOLLOWS CARDINAL'S AND BISHOPS' LINE.)

3. CARDINAL JULY 27 MADE PUBLIC STATEMENT THAT CONTAINS FIRST HINT OF CRITICISM OF GOVERNMENT NOTED IN SME TIME. SAID HE HAD "TOLD HIGHEST AUTHORITIES OF MY COUNTRY" THAT WITHOUT UNITY CHILE CANNOT HAVE PROSPERITY, PEACE OR JUSTICE. CARDINAL CALLED FOR A CRUSADE FOR MUTUAL RESPECT AND TOLERANCE.

4. CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS' RADIO BALMACEDA HAS FEATURED NEWS ON DISAPPEARED PERSONS. RADIO STAFF MEMBER TOLD USIS OFFICER THAT RESPONSIBLE GOC OFFICIAL SEVERAL DAYS AGO WARNED RADIO TO TREAD LIGHTLY IN ITS REPORTS. DESPITE THE WARNING, BALMACEDA JULY 29 QUOTED EXTENSIVELY FROM PEACE COMMITTEE STATEMENT (REF C), AND APPARENTLY FROM COMMITTEE'S ANALYSIS OF THE 119 CASES (REF B). RADIO SAID THAT BUENOS AIRES MAGAZINE "LEA," WHICH PUBLISHED FIRST LIST OF 60 SUPPOSED DEAD EXTREMISTS, WAS FOUNDED RECENTLY BY SUPPORTERS OF JOSE LOPEZ REGA, "WHO IS ACCUSED" OF TIES TO AAA. (COMMENT: OTHER SOURCES HAVE TOLD EMBASSY THE SAME). IT SAID SECOND LIST OF 59 NAMES "HAD BEEN GIVEN (TO SENSATIONALIST PRO-GOC "LA SEGUNDA") BY CHILEAN INTELLIGENCE SERVICES" ON BASIS OF SUPPOSED INFORMATION APPEARING IN "O DIA" OF CURITABA.

5. COMMENT: POSSIBLE DEATH/DISAPPEARANCE OF 119 SUPPOSED MIRISTAS IS BEING GIVEN FAIRLY WIDE PUBLICITY AND BEING DISCUSSED AVIDLY. OPINION IS SPLIT ALONG POLITICAL LINES: GOVERNMENT SUPPORTERS SAY MIRISTAS KILLED EACH OTHER OR DIED IN CLASHES WITH ARGENTINE SECURITY FORCES. GOC CRITICS ACKNOWLEDGE THERE IS NO DIRECT EVIDENCE TO TIE GOC SECURITY FORCES TO ALLEGED DEATHS ABROAD BUT BELIEVE THE ENTIRE STORY SMELLS.

6. CARDINAL FOR MANY MONTHS HAS AVOIDED PUBLIC POLEMICS WITH GOC. TO CRITICIZE IT NOW WOULD INDICATE HOW GRAVE HE CONSIDERS THIS MATTER TO BE.
POPPER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: WELFARE & WHEREABOUTS, EXTREMISTS, CHURCH STATE RELATIONS, INVESTIGATIONS, RELIGIOUS LEADERS, RADIO BROADCASTING
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 29 JUL 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975SANTIA05256
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750262-0284
From: SANTIAGO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750712/aaaaaksi.tel
Line Count: 98
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 SANTIAGO 5185, 75 SANTIAGO 590, 75 SANTIAGO 5225
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 02 JUL 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <02 JUL 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <03 JUL 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CHURCH, CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS, AND DEAD/DISAPPEARED CHILEAN EXTREMISTS
TAGS: PINT, SHUM, PINS, CI, MIR
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006